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Mr David Rose
Chief Executive Officer
KEITS Training Services Ltd
502 Centennial Park
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Dear Mr Rose

Short inspection of KEITS Training Services Ltd

Following the short inspection on 14 January 2016, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since KEITS Training Services Ltd (KEITS) was judged to be good in March 2010.

KEITS Training Services Ltd continues to be good.

You and your staff have established a culture of challenge and continuous improvement. Staff regularly review the provision both strategically and operationally. As a result of this work, you and your staff have maintained the strengths from the previous inspection. In addition KEITS has dealt effectively with the recommendations from the previous inspection and additional challenges that have arisen. We identified a few areas for you to improve and we were able to help you and your senior leaders recognise these during our visit.

As a result of constant review, KEITS is in a good position to respond quickly to the needs of learners and employers, while considering local and national priorities. For example, we noted that leaders have further developed your horticulture provision to meet the needs of learners in prison and to respond to local priorities by developing higher apprenticeship programmes.

Leaders managed well the introduction of traineeships and have a clear focus on ensuring that programmes meet the needs of those young people for whom they are intended. Your staff work well with individual learners and employers to ensure that learners' programmes are matched well to their aspirations and employment in order to meet their needs. You have maintained this strength well.

Leaders have maintained the strength of learners' outcomes overall. The quality of learners' work continues to be good and they gain good technical knowledge. In addition, learners receive good guidance about their future options and have a clear understanding about their progression routes. However, there is still work to do on outcomes for those on business studies programmes, traineeships, and the very few learners on classroom-based programmes.

Staff provide good support for the development of learners' English and mathematics skills and teachers place good emphasis on the development of these skills. Staff carry out detailed assessments of learners' starting points and use the results from these to plan support well – a recommendation from the previous inspection that you have dealt with effectively. The improvement in the way that you and your staff focus on subcontractors' performance is shown by the robust way that you dealt with one underperforming subcontractor. Leaders recognise that there is still work to do on ensuring that staff monitor the impact of subcontractors' improvement actions.

Learners' views are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of their experiences and the benefits they gain from being on their training programmes. Employers are similarly positive. Learners enjoy their learning and understand well a range of social issues which they discuss during reviews and learn about from informative newsletter articles, which challenge perceptions. For example, one article titled 'not just girls' raised the issue of anorexia in men.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your staff continue to focus well on safeguarding and have further developed this work. Leaders have merged all groups dealing with different aspects of safeguarding, health and safety, and equality. This single group now has an overall view of these related aspects and is more able to coordinate safeguarding issues and KEITS' responses to them. Staff monitor learners' experiences well. Learners are safe, feel safe and adopt safe working practices. Learners are very good at carrying out workplace risk assessments relevant to their occupational area, for example lone working. However, there is still work to do in the scrutiny of subcontractors' safeguarding records.

Inspection findings

- Leaders and managers have a good capacity to monitor and improve the quality of the provision, and deal with problems that arise effectively. In addition leaders and managers use that capacity well to plan for the future and ensure that the provision is sustainable. Staff have dealt effectively with a number of issues that have arisen. For example, success rates in horticulture provision started to drop. Leaders took swift and decisive action which resulted in rates improving to above national averages.

- Leaders and managers have maintained the strengths relating to safeguarding and safe working practices. Staff check subcontractors and workplaces rigorously. They carry out a detailed initial visit and routine follow-up visits. They check the details of subcontractors' practices and discuss safeguarding issues with them during visits. However, they do not scrutinise subcontractors' safeguarding records routinely to confirm all actions are recorded well.
- Leaders took a proactive approach to early implementation of the 'Prevent' strategy, the government's anti-extremism policy. All KEITS' and subcontractors' staff had completed the relevant training by September 2015, the implementation date for learning providers. Staff produce regular newsletters about equality, diversity, safeguarding and 'Prevent'. These contain informative articles which do not shy away from dealing with sensitive issues such as female genital mutilation and terrorism. Articles also promote thinking about subjects relating to faith and religion.
- Leaders and managers have worked well to maintain overall outcomes for learners at previous good levels. Current learners are making good progress. Support for learners from teachers is particularly good. Retention has improved and your own data indicate an increase from 2014/15 to 2015/16. Learners speak well, and confidently, about their work and they use technical language well. However, staff are fully aware that some areas are not performing as well. Learners on business studies programmes, and the very few learners on classroom-based programmes, are not achieving as well as others.
- Leaders have ensured that the provision meets the needs of learners and employers well, linked with local and national priorities. Senior staff have good links with local area groups and use these well to continually review the provision. For example, one of the local priorities is to increase the number of learners on higher apprenticeships. You responded quickly and have established a programme for these learners, including management training to help small and medium-sized enterprises prosper. Also, you have introduced a programme of horticulture provision for learners in prisons in the area, and a related programme to provide prison staff with skills to deliver the training.
- Leaders have focused well on implementing traineeships. All elements of the traineeship are in place and staff have worked well with subcontractors to ensure they suit learners' needs, aspirations and progression plans. For example, staff identified that learners on traineeships in one work placement were only doing mundane and repetitive tasks and not gaining sufficient work experience. Staff acted swiftly and effectively to rectify this. The proportion of learners on traineeships who progress into employment, further education or apprenticeships increased in 2014/15. However, this still requires improvement.
- Leaders and managers have improved the monitoring of subcontractors by making it a continuous process throughout the year. Targets set for subcontractors are higher than national rates. Staff monitor closely the progress that learners are making, both those with whom you work directly and those with subcontractors. Staff make good use of the 'at-risk register' to identify learners who need additional support and challenge subcontractors well to take effective action to improve the progress these learners are making. While you

provide a range of training for subcontractors, staff do not monitor attendance or evaluate the impact of this training thoroughly.

- Managers collect a wide range of performance data to inform improvement actions, including learner feedback. This is another recommendation from the previous inspection that you have dealt with well. Managers also use information from the observations of teaching, learning and assessment on your staff and those employed by the subcontractor. Leaders are clearly aware of the quality of the provision and improvement actions are clearly identified. However, the self-assessment report does not identify the impact of subcontractors' actions sufficiently and it is not clear how strengths and weaknesses identified link with the quality improvement plan.

Next steps for KEITS Training Services Ltd

Leaders should ensure that:

- the focus on safeguarding is further improved by robust monitoring of the impact of subcontractors' actions when dealing with safeguarding issues
- all learners achieve well, particularly those on business studies programmes, classroom-based programmes and traineeships
- managers monitor the attendance of subcontractors' staff at training sessions and the impact of the training
- the impact of subcontractors' improvement actions is clearly identified and that strengths and areas for improvement identified in the self-assessment report are linked more clearly in the quality improvement plan.

This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Derrick Baughan
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection we were assisted by one of your directors. We met you, your senior leaders, managers and staff. We visited learners in the workplace and subcontractors premises, to look at learners' work. We spoke to learners and held meetings with staff and managers. We also carried out a number of telephone discussions with learners and subcontractors. We reviewed key documents, including those relating to strategic planning, self-assessment, performance and safeguarding. We considered the views of learners, subcontractors and employers during the inspection.